

No
20

Christian Zeal Recommended:

IN A
S E R M O N
Preached at
A N D O V E R,
ON
May the 15th 1704.

B E I N G

The Visitation of the Reverend Mr. Ralph
Brideoake, Arch-Deacon of Winton.

By SAMUEL SMEATON,
Vicar of Nether-Wallop in Hampshire.

Published at the joyn Request of the Reverend Mr. Arch-Deacon,
and the Reverend Clergy of the Deanry of Andover.

The Second Edition.

LONDON, Printed for Philip Monckton, at the
Star in St. Paul's Church Yard. 1705.



To the Reverend
Mr. RALPH BRIDEOAKE,
Arch-Deacon of *Winton*,
AND THE
Reverend Clergy of the
Deanry of *ANDOVER*.

Reverend Sirs,

YOURS affectionate zeal to our excellent Constitution, and your Abhorrence of that treacherous Neutrality, and pretended Moderation, by which it is undermined, were the only Motives that induced you to desire the Publication of this Sermon.

The singular Veneration I have for your Judgments has encouraged me to venture the Publick Censure; had not your Approbation recommended it to the Press, it had certainly been buried in the same Obscurity with its Author. What at your Request, which was to me a Command, is now

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Published, I am not proud of, though not ashamed of the plainness of the Truth therein contained: I hope I have fairly stated a becoming Zeal; and when God's Glory is purely concerned, if to be earnest here, is to be a High Churchman, and so to be accounted vile, may we be more vile; Names renowned in themselves are sometimes reproachfully meant: A great Person declares he knows no High-Church but the Church of Rome, and may it not be aptly replyed, That no Church-man is so truly low, as he that is scarcely any; no Man ever yet hated his own Flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church. He that willfully injures that Body, that Church-Communion he professes himself peculiarly to belong to, betrays either his want of Integrity, or Understanding; he personates a Body that is not properly his; he dissembles that Communion that is contrary to his natural Complexion, and original Education: Thus to do the greater mischief he puts on Angelick light, and really is not what he shews for; or that Man must be besides himself, who really tears his own Flesh, or suffers it to be torn; but the honest and wise Man conduces all that lies in him to the being, and well-being, to the support and comfort, to the security, and prosperity

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prosperity of that Communion, he is strictly of. We do not say, that he may be rightly charged for hating his own Flesh, that loves no Body but himself ; for though Charity begins at home, it is not confined there, but is to extend to all, even our Enemies : Yet it must still be accompanied with Prudence ; we may and ought to love an Enemy, to forgive, and feed, and cloath him, but not to caress, indulge, and embosome him ; we are not bound to be so far charitable to an Enemy, as to be cruel to our selves ; to put a Sword into his hand, and to tempt him with Power and Opportunity to destroy us, that he may seize our Inheritance.

This sort of moderation, or unaccountable fondness, is very injurious to the Church.

May the truly sincere, and undesigning Dissenter, enjoy the liberty of his Conscience, without the least disturbance ; and may all sweet and gentle Methods be used to convince him of his Error. But, I hardly believe that a firm Churchman, unless his Intellectuals fail him, can cordially wish and contribute his Endeavours towards it, that the Dissenter may be invested with such Authority, as to be able to turn his Toleration into an Establishment, and to make the present Establishment glad

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glad of a Toleration. Is it Persecution not to make our Enemy too mighty? Is it an Encroachment upon his Toleration, to fine the Dissenter for obstinate Profaneness, I had almost said horrid Blasphemy, making a Market of the holy Eucharist? Shall disabling a dangerous Man from high Preferments be compared to Burnings, and capital Punishments in Point of Religion? Peradventure some may be such sordid Slaves, as to esteem Riches and Honour dearer than their Lives, and must they be herein humoured? With reference to the Bill against Occasional Conformity, a great Person hath these words: As for the Enacting part, when in a proper time a Bill shall be brought in, disabling all to hold any Employment, except those who continue in the Church of England, I shall heartily concur in it. But he thinks it not now a proper time, for such a Bill to be entertained. With Submission, Why not a proper time now, when the Orthodox Church of England Commons (to their immortal Honour be it spoken) had so unanimously passed the Bill, and so Argumentatively pressed it?

Why not a proper time now; when having War abroad, it is more requisite to take heed that the Government be all of a piece at home?

Doth

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Doth this divide and weaken us ; so as to create in Portugal and Savoy a melancholy Suspicion, that England will not be able to assist them ? Is it not a proper time ; alas, this looks like a Dilatory Plea. Thus Fælix, when he was taken with Trembling at St. Paul's pathetick Discourse of Righteousness, Temperance, and Judgment to come; to divert these dismal Thoughts, and with a design no doubt to be troubled no more with them, he softly dismisses the Apostle, saying, Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient Season I will call for thee. It is suggested as if this Bill struck at the Toleration granted the Dissenters, and that beginning severely with the Men, the next step would be their Wives and Children. Is not this a vile Reflection on that Honourable House, whose Protestations and solemn Assurances might abundantly satisfy a candid Mind ; should these be the unworthy Conjectures of some weak and jealous headed Dissenters, maliciously intimating what the Church may, by what themselves would do, were they uppermost. A faithful Church-man would rather remove, than encourage these their unreasonable Fears ; and like a discreet and compassionate Parent, loath to have his Children over terrified with fantastical Bugbears,

would

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would carefully seek to undeceive and pacifie them :
But my Brethren, to improve our Disappointments ; let
us impartially inquire into our selves, to find out
what grievous Sins those were, that provoked the Di-
vine Justice to permit the miscarriage of a Bill, as to
the Subject-matter of it , confessed even by those
who rejected it, to be laudable ; a Bill wherein the
Safety and glory of our Church so much consisted.
Let us amend our Lives, and unfeignedly turn to
God, that he may at last graciously turn to us, and
delight to do us good. Nor in speaking thus to our
selves, do I altogether acquit them of Sin, who were
so forward to cast a stone at us.

To conclude, let us, my Brethren, adorn our holy
Profession with a circumspect, and unexceptionable
Conversation ; let us heartily pray for, and with our
utmost Industry promote the Peace of our Jerusalem ;
and may they for ever prosper, that entirely love it,
and are zealously affected towards it ; amongst whom
'tis my Ambition to be reckoned, and to subscribe my
Self,

My worthy Brethren,

Your most affectionate Brother,
and most humble Servant,

Sam. Smeaton.

A

Visitation-Sermon

Preach'd at

Andover, May 15th. 1074.

Gal. 4th. former part of the 8th. Verse.
It is good to be Zealously affected always in a good
thing.

THE chief Design of this Epistle was to vindicate the liberty of the Gospel from the Judaical yoke, which the Jews eagerly endeavoured to impose upon all Gentiles that undertook the Christian Profession; the *Galatians* had in the absence of St. Paul been perverted, and seduced by the *Gnosticks*; who joyned with the *Jews* in pressing the Rite of Circumcision upon them, teaching them, that it was not enough for men to embrace and confess the Christian Religion, unless they kept the Law of Moses, or at least submitted to that great Precept of Circumcision; the neglect whereof among all the affirmative Precepts of the Law, was only threatned

threatned with Excision. And of the prevalency of this Errorr, and great disturbance which it made in the Christian Church; we have a particular account, *Act's 15th.* where a general Council of the Apostles is called, and a Letter written in their Names to all the Christian Churches, to rectifie their apprehensions in this matter, ver. 24. of that Chapter. *Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us, have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, ye must be circumcised, and keep the law, of whom we gave no such commandment, &c.* After St. Paul had in this Epistle confuted this Errorr, which he calls the preaching of another Gospel, than what the Apostles had preached, and the Christians first received; in the beginning of the 5th. Chapter, he exhorts them to assert the liberty which Christ had purchased for them, from the Obligation of the Law of Moses, ver. 1, 2. *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free; and be not intangled again with a yoke of bondage.* Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. He tells them likewise in the Verse immediately preceding the Text, that this great pretended Zeal of these false Teachers, was out of no sincere Affection, or Desire of their good, but that they might supplant him, and seduce them; they, says he, Zealously affect you, but not well, yea they would exclude you, that you might affect them; you from the true Faith, us from being Apostles; wherefore beware of them for their Zeal is not right in respect of the object, for tho' it be good to be zealously affected always, yet it should

should be in a good thing. Having thus cleared the occasion, and meaning of the words, I come now to consider the particulars contained in them, which are these following.

1. A Commendation of true Religious Zeal; *It is good to be zealously affected.*

2. The Object of a true Zeal, about which it ought only to be conversant, i. e. *a good thing.*

3. The Constancy, or extent of our Zeal, *It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing.*

Lastly, I shall endeavour to perswade you, and my self, to be always thus *zealously affected in a good thing.*

In the treating of these particulars, it will be needful for me to examine what is the Nature of true Zeal, so that I may prove it to be a good thing to be always zealously affected. Zeal is, as other Passions are, in its own Nature indifferent, and of its self neither good nor bad; but according to the object and degree of it; for Zeal is nothing else but an earnest Concernment for or against something, and a violent pursuit and prosecution of it; this for Zeal in general. By a true Religious Christian Zeal, I mean a warm and well govern'd Resolution to act according to Christ's Laws, for there are two sorts of Zeal which are faulty, one is that which is *not according to knowledge*, as St. Paul tells us, Rom. 10. 2. a blind Passion, or *Impetus*, that hurries all before it upon presumptions and mistakes; and without a deliberate calm Examination of the merits of the Cause. Such a Zeal was his own, while he yet

breathed out Threatnings and Slaughter against the Disciples of the Lord, he verily thought, he was bound to do many things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, Acts 26. 9. This was his mistaken Zeal ; and therefore he obtained Mercy afterwards, because what he had done he did it ignorantly in unbelief, 1 Tim. 1. 13. There is another sort of Zeal which is not according to Sobriety ; an inordinate heat of mind, and that too misapplied about objects which are not so proper, tho' the Mans Judg-
ment be right and sound ; when Zeal is employed about minute matters in comparison ; about the Circumstantial, rather than about the Essentials of Religion : Such a Zeal was theirs, who were strict and nice about Mint, Annise and Cummin ; but omitted the weightier Matters of the Law, Righteousness, Mercy, and Faith : These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone, says our Saviour. Our Zeal should be attended with light, as well as warmth ; with regularity and due application, as well as fervency ; and then 'tis a well governed Zeal ; a Disposition made up of a right Principle, and of due temper and prudence. 'Tis true indeed Christian Zeal has its heats, but actu-
ated in a far different way ; it has flames of Love, not of Anger ; to melt, not consume our Enemies ; and makes us apter to pour out our own Blood a Sacriifice to Truth, than that of Gain-sayers : In short, if it be a fire, 'tis that pure Elemental which the Peripateticks talk of, which is but of a moderate heat, apt to cherish not devour ; but yet not so moderate as to dwindle into loathsome Lukewarm-
ness, treacherous Neutrality, and indifference in Religion,

Religion, which God abhors. The being moderately and indifferently good, is no very proper Character for a Christian, and least of all, for those who pretend to the most excellent Reformation, and to be the most exact and perfect Christians; nor has moderation any thing to do in the Service of God, here it is quite out of Doors, Zeal according to knowledge being the true Mein and Temper. So that provided we mistake not the Way and Method, we can never be too warm and active in our Desires or Endeavours after our own or our Neighbours Salvation. Thus I have given a short, but true Character of a religious Zeal; with its vicious opposites and extreams, both in the excess, and defect.

2. I proceed to the Second particular: The object about which our Zeal ought only to be conversant. Zeal being an Emotion of the mind arising from the highest esteem, and warmest love, whereby we are excited to pursue to the utmost the Interest and Service of what we thus esteem and love. And because God only can deserve this exalted degree of Devotion, therefore zeal is abused, and misapplied when it has any other object. So that strictly speaking, we are not zealous but furious, when we eagerly pursue any thing besides the glory of God, and what he requires of us in order to his Honour and Service. For this is *the only good thing*, in which we can as Christians, or even as Men, *be always* and without exception *zealously affected*. And if we desire our Zeal should be according to knowledge, we must take care that every Act of it be proportioned to that rank, which each particular action holds in

in the Service of God. In the first place then my Brethren, *Let us follow righteousness; let us keep the faith; let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.* The excellency of the Christian Religion is such, as having God for its Author, and Christ for its Head, as being not only of God's appointment, but having his last and finishing Hand, being the most perfect Institution of Life and Manners, that ever was delivered to the World; as it was ushered into the World with wonderful means and circumstancies, enlarged and propagated with a miraculous Success, preserved and maintained against the Gates of Hell and Malice of Men; notwithstanding the fury of its Enemies and Degeneracy of its Professors, by an extraordinary Providence, that there is no Person that hears me, none that owns this Profession, but will readily grant, that we ought to be zealously affected towards it, emulous of it, jealous of it; every one striving to out-do his Neighbour, who should contribute most to preserve and maintain it. But considering how this one profession is diversified, and controvected by its Professors, how many distinct Churches are set up, all pretending to this Religion, but at open Defiance with each other about the terms of it, how the Romish Church excommunicates and damns all other Churches, allowing no Salvability out of it, how other Churches charge that as Babylonish, Anti-Christian, and Idolatrous, by consequence allowing no safety in it; how our own Church, tho' careful to avoid both extremes, like a Mediator between two enraged Enemies, suffers from each of them, accused by one as Popish, and Superstitious; by the other

other as Schismatical, and Heretical ; weak and unstable minds are hereby amused and perplexed ; those in general that are convinced of the excellency of the Christian Religion, above all that ever were in the World, that are willing, yea, and resolved to be zealously affected towards it ; amidst so many several Tracks, and Paths, are at a loss for the way ; amidst so many Pretenders know not where to chuse a Guide ; conscientiously, even to anxiety, they pursue the thing, but in this distracting variety, are extremely doubtful, and diffident, where in truth and sincerity they may find it. My Brethren, as you desire to be zealously affected to that which is good ; as you desire to know the truth as it is in Christ Jesus ; I speak principally to you, who already know it, search the Scriptures, the old and new Testament (for what was spoken of the old is as true of the new) they are they that testifie of Christ, and contain his Religion ; in whatsoever Body of Men, whatsoever Church, you find the greatest Reverence and Respect paid to these ; where they are acknowledged to be a complete rule of Faith, fairly communicated, faithfully interpreted, *i. e.* with the greatest Harmony and Consent of one part to another, most consonant to the sense and practice of the Primitive Church ; there believe your selves to have the purity of the Christian Faith : for where can you with greater Reason expect it than in that Church, which keeps itself to its most ancient Records, to the original Draught, Model and Platform of it, much surer ground this than oral Tradition, the unwritten Word, as the Papists call it, which if we consider its

its ill Success in the first tho' long liv'd Ages of the world ; how difficult and hazardous is its conveyance, how lyable it is to Fraud and Imposture, what eternal feuds it may occasion in the Catholick Church, from the disagreeing Pretences of distant Communions, is as impracticable a ground to build our Faith on, as it is to raise a Tower up to Heaven amidst a confusion of Languages. Were there any such treasure in their Church as they pretend, it were highly their interest, for establishing their own Power, and restoring Peace to the Church, (which for want of knowing these Traditions we cannot attain to) to give us at last, what they have been so often urged to, a Catalogue of these Traditions. A much surer ground this, even the written word of God, whereupon to rest our Faith, than any infallibility of Man ; this the Papists pretend to, but with so much uncertainty, that it is a great Argument of their want of it, and that they have no infallible Oracle to fix it ; some place it in a general Council, some in the Pope with a general Council, neither of which, nor all can be Infallible, because both joyntly, and severally, they have erred ; some in the Pope alone ; of which Order, besides that many have been so debauched in their Lives, that we have little reason to believe that they had the constant conduct of God's Spirit, who had so little of his Fear ; some have even in *Cathedra* defined point blank contrary, as impossible both to be true, and they therefore to be infallible, as they to be infallible, and this also to be true ; let God be true and every Man a liar. A Third sort, and those of a later date, place this Infallibility in the present dif-

fusive

fusive Church; all that at this present time live within the Communion of it; as much as to say, That whatsoever is at any time taught and professed in the Church of *Rome*, is therefore certainly true; because they all agree in the profession of it, sufficiently confuted by our Saviour's argument, *John 5. 31.* *They witness of themselves, their witness is not true,* as the Scriptures are a more certain ground for our Faith, than what the Papists pretend to, Tradition and Infallibility; they as much exceed also the pretences of a private Spirit; and the illumination of *Enthusiasts*; whose persuasions being oft-times the product of a strong Fancy, and distempered Brain; sometimes worse, even diabolical Infusions and Inspirations, are no safe rule for themselves to walk by; who know not how better to judge of them, than by this rule the word of God. As they are no safe rule for themselves, neither are they to be allowed in any Society, much less in a Christian, where there should be least Licentiousness; for what Government ever permitted, or how indeed does it consist with the very being of Government, that every private Spirit should be able to controul publick Laws, and that every Man should do that which is right in his own eyes? As they are neither safe for themselves, nor the Government they live under, much less can they be a rule for any Man besides; the world had never entertained Christianity merely upon the Apostles pretence to Revelation and the Spirit, except they had also had (what I challenge our *Enthusiasts* to produce) when they have a mind to convince, the Power of God to witness to his Truth,

a miraculous attestation ; the Scriptures at last being the only rule of Faith, in whatsoever Church you find them owned, and used as such, there as I said before, you have reason to believe, that you have the purity of the Christian Faith.

In the Church of *England* now ; that Church whose Government is Episcopal, whose Doctrine is in her Articles and Homilies ; whose rule of Government is in her Canons ; whose Service and Devotion is in her Liturgy. In this Church as it is established by Law, separated from the Romish Church by the Reformation, fenced from the Dissenters and Fanaticks by the Law, you have the written word of God plainly held forth, and owned, she makes it the entire Rule of Faith, and sole Judge of Controversies : All that are either possible or necessary to be decided, either by general Rules, or particular Explication, by immediate Proof, or proper Inferences, directly, or according to just proportion, and analogy, are hereby determined ; to this nothing is wanting, all that is necessary to Salvation, is contained in them ; as they want not Perfection, so neither Perspicuity, whatsoever is necessary to be known, is so plainly laid down in them, that he who runs may read it.

Thus doth our Church teach of the Scriptures, what God himself testifies of his word ; that they were *a lantern to our feet, a light to our paths*, that they were able to make us wise unto Salvation, to make the Man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works. These Scriptures she charitably, and like a tender Mother, allows the meanest to converse with ; so far from hiding her meaning in the learned Languages,

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guages, that by her Sons each week, she interprets, and endeavours to make them as plain, as the vulgar and Mother-tongue can make them; these Scriptures she interprets, allows only to be interpreted according to the sense of the most primitive Fathers, herein out-doing Presbytery (the very bane and pest of this Church) who of all those yet that separate from it, pretends most veneration for the Scriptures, but in the main point wherein we differ, either deserts, or what is worse, wrests and perverts them, dividing from the most primitive Antiquity in the interpretation of them.

This Church, now my Brethren, as she holds forth to us the Holy Scriptures, the Rule of Faith and Manners, so by making it plain and easie, she endeavours to make it most useful and profitable to us: This Church as it is in all respects good, justly calls upon us to be zealously affected to it; to hold and maintain it.

A Church, not set forth with the gaudiness and *fucus* of an Harlot, nor displaying it self in pompous Procession, and fantastical Pageantry, like the Roman; nor nakedly exposed, or sluttishly apparelled without any ornament, like the Fanatick; but like a comely Matron, contenting her self with her own native Beauty, and a modest Dress according to the Apostolick rule of Decency and Order, attired only with few, and those proper, and profitable Ceremonies; tending most to the Glory of God, and the Edification of her Children.

A Church, which placeth not too much of her Religion in good works, like the Roman, nor without respect to good works, contracts it only to Believing, like our modern Puritan Solifidians; which

sets not so great a value upon the *opus operatum*, the thing done, as to make that sufficient, and acceptable to God without the hearty concurrence and attention of the Doer; nor otherwise like the same Church, therein contrary to her self, ascribes so little to the thing done, as to make all the validity of her Sacraments, to the great hazard of Souls, depend wholly upon the secret meaning and intention of their Administrator; which in derogation to the Grace of God ascribes not proper merit to the works of Man, like the Papists, nor with our Calvinists, and Anti-remonstrants, so exalts the Grace of God as to make all the endeavours of Man superfluous, unprofitable, and unnecessary; but proposeth to all her Children joynly, and hand in hand, Faith and good Works; Faith as the Fountain, good Works as Rivers that must flow from it; Faith as a Tree of Life, good Works as the Fruits of it; Faith as the cause of those Works, those Works as Evidences of our Faith; Faith to justifie us, good Works to justifie and verifie our Faith; she proposeth the *opus operatum*, or the outward Act, as the Body, the actual attention, and affectionate concurrence of the Doer (as that without which that Body is but a Carcase) the Life and Soul of her Religion; she makes not the validity of her Sacraments any farther depend upon the intention of the Administrator, than as to the effect they have upon his own person, who administers them upon all else so his Character be right, they operate either freely and according to the Covenant of God, or to their Preparation and Disposition that receive them; she teacheth us, that it is the Grace of God which

which first begets in us the Inclinations and Dispositions to good ; that with our own Endeavours we must cherish and ferment those Inclinations ; co-operate with that Grace, which must at last crown and complete them.

Thus doth our Church joyn Faith and good Works, as the two essential parts of our Religion ; the outward Work, and the inward Grace as the Soul and Body, the two essential parts not only of a Man, but a Christian ; she calls in the Grace of God to actuate and animate our endeavours, our endeavours to be subservient to, and co-operate with his Grace, that we do what we can towards the working out our own Salvation, and where that doth fall short, as by it self considered certainly it will, she sendeth us to, teaches us to depend upon, ascribes all the merit of the Success to the Grace of God, to the praise and glory of our Maker.

A Church, which confines not her Devotions to the learned and unknown Tongue, like the Romish, contrary to the express and plain meaning of the 14th Chapter to the *Corinthians*, or sends her Children over all the Land to gather straw, and suffers them like the Fanaticks to affront that Majesty before whom they present themselves, with their crude, indigested, incoherent, if not nonsensical oblations ; but conformable to the practice of the Jewish Church, a type and pattern of the Christian, conformable to the word of God ; which commends to us a form of sound words, that we pray not only with our Spirit, but with our Understanding also ; which directs that all things be done with Order, and to Edification ; conformable to the practice of the Primitive Church ;

Church ; in which Liturgies in their own Mother-tongue were universally used, hath for the help of the learned, and the greater Edification of the unlearned, in our own tongue, appointed us a Liturgy, or form of publick Prayers, collected out, and suitable to the best and most ancient Patterns, agreeable to the word of God ; in which one thing considerable is to be remarked, that in all its parts, in all its offices, the Lord's Prayer, the most perfect of all Prayers, the most perfect pattern of Prayer, is still constituted as a principal part ; thereby assuring us, that having the Pole-Star still in her Eye, she could not steer amiss, nor err in her Prescriptions, following his Example and Directions, even the Son of God the only Mediator, and Intercessor between God and us, through whom alone it is, that all our Prayers can be accepted, and effectual.

A Church, which in the great Mystery of our Religion, the greatest instance of our Devotion, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, neither explicates, or rather implicates the thing by an impossible, and therefore erroneous Notion, and thereupon runs the risque of Idolatry, by founding Divine Worship upon such an interpretation ; nor Sacrilegiously with-holds the Cup from the Laity, for whom both parts are instituted, by whom both parts by its first Institutor were commanded to be received ; nor like our own Dissenters, by a rare and infrequent use, or an irreverent Susception vilifies and prophanes it, but receives it according to its first Institution, believes all that our Saviour has declared of it, that this is his Body, this is his Blood, true in the same sense that he intended it Sacramental, Spiritual,

tual, and by consequence the Presence is real, so real, as to be effectual to all religious purposes; (as any way that it is possible to be received.) She administers it according to its first Institution, in both kinds, commands, and exhorts her Children in Commemoration of the great Sacrifice, the Death of Christ, for the pardon of their Sins, for the strengthening their Graces; and in humble acknowledgment of the great Love of God therein represented, frequently to receive it; she appoints the most devout affections of the Soul, the humblest posture of the Body, to accompany the Reception of it, paying all possible reverence, except what would be more properly an affront and injury than respect to the Author of it, Adoration of the sensible Elements.

A Church, which supplicates not the Saints above, with a presumptuous, and impertinent Invocation, like the Roman; presumptuous, because groundless, and without warrant; both presumptuous and impertinent in that we can have no assurance, that they hear those Prayers that we offer to them; without entitling them to God's incommunicable Attribute, Ubiquity, and Omnipresence, in that we are assured, that there is but one Mediator between God and Man and he such an one, as having been touched with the feeling of our InfirmitieS, we may come boldly to the Throne of Grace, as the Apostle phraseth it, Eph. 3. 12. *Have boldness and access with confidence by the Faith of him*, without the help of subordinate, or intermediate Intercessors; nor yet like our own Dissenters doth our Church injuriously treat the Memory of the blessed Saints, as with an unmanerly

Quakerism.

Quakerism to deny them the just Titles of Honour, and banish them out of her Kalendar; but free from the Superstition of the one, and the Irreverence of the other, with a pious Devotion solemnizeth the Day of their Martyrdom, gives God thanks for their Graces, gratefully celebrates their Memories, and proposeth their Lives, and Examples, for our Imitation.

A Church, which exalts not the Church above the Crown, either in a single person, with the Papists, nor in the multitude of Pastors, and Lay-Elders, like the many headed Monster of Presbytery; but reserving to her self the power of Order in the person of her Ministers, as proper and peculiar to their Function; she looks upon Kings and Princes, what the Spirit of God has promised, that they should be nursing Fathers and Mothers of the Church, and therefore allows and affirms, all that to belong to them, which the Kings of *Israel* and *Judah*, and all Christian Princes have, or ought to have enjoyed in the Church of God, the external Government and Administration of it.

A Church, whose onely fault (if that be any) is her Charity. She allows possibility of Salvation to all those that hold the Foundation, to those that separate from her, so it proceed not from wilfulness, but weakness, to those from whom she separates, provided their Errors and Corruptions be seated not in the Will, but the Understanding, be faults not of Malice, but of Ignorance; They on the one side brand her as Superstitious and Idolatrous, those on the other hand condemn her as Schismatical, and Heretical; which besides

besides that is no better Argument against her, than what the Donatists might have urged against the Catholick Church, is indeed a strong Argument for her; that Charity of hers which is peculiar to her, by her Adversaries wrested, and mis-employed against her, being as true a Note, as any *Bellarmino* hath assigned of the Church of Christ; as it is by Christ himself made the great Criterion, and Characteristick of his Disciples, *Job. 13. 35*. Besides that, the Subject would afford me many more instances of her excellent Constitution and Temperament.

Such (my Brethren) is the Church of *England*, that Church which is established by Law, whose Children we profess our selves, and in whose Communion we live. A Church, free (God be thanked) from the Usurpation and Tyranny of the Papacy, from the Confusion and Anarchy of Fanaticism; free from the Theatrical Pomp and Superstition of the one, and from the Profaneness and Irreverence of the other.

A Church, which builds her self upon the surest Foundation, the Word of God; whose Government is Primitive and Apostolical, whose Liturgy is pure, agreeable to the Word of God, collected out of the most ancient Patterns, corrected and reformed from all later Errors; whose *Credenda*, and Confession of her Faith are on both sides embraced, wherein the Word of God is truly Preached, his Sacraments duly administered, to which nothing is wanting necessary to salvation:

This Church, (now my Brethren) as it is in all these respects good; let us be zealously affected towards it. And this brings me to the Third Particular;

The extent, or constancy of our Zeal : *It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing.*

Truth and Goodness are constant and uniform, and so ought our Affections to be ; we must not only make profession of our Zeal by fits and starts, but in the general course and tenour of our Lives and Actions, without any balks and intermissions, in all Revolutions and changes of Government; in times of Difficulty and Distress, when the Church is under the Cross, as well as when it has the favour of the Crown ; as it is our Duty in all times to be zealously affected to the Church, so especially at this, when she is so potently assaulted by open Enemies, and pretended Friends. We have lived to see Religion attacked by a company of wicked Men, who go under the name of Deists, Libertines, and Socinians ; Heresie and Schism are now looked upon to be only Theological Scare-Crows, fit to affright Fools and Children, but not wise Men, who know how to despise such pompous and empty Accusations.

We have lived to see the Heresie of *Nestorius* revived, and the Articles of our Religion expounded in such a manner, as to incur the Censure of an Orthodox House of Convocation. And had the Church enjoyed that Primitive Discipline which she has so long wanted, and so long wished for, in all probability, the Exposition might have undergone the Fate of the Pastoral Letter.

The Church of *England* as it sustains that Denomination, stands distinguished from Dissenters of all sorts, by her Canons, Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy ; and the old way of pursuing the Churches interest, was by being true to these our selves, and by using

using our Authority and Power, that others might be so too. And this is the way that hath hitherto been used by all those, who have heartily, and honestly espoused the interest of the Church, from the beginning of the Reformation, but this way does not please our Latitudinarian Doctors, our pretended Friends. They are for a new way of their own; the way of Alteration, and Comprehension, the way of moderate Episcopacy, or no Episcopacy; they are endeavouring to alter and comprehend away the Church, and being themselves false to her Principles and Constitution, they are designing to frame a Church of the same model, and make it as false as themselves; instead of keeping Schism out of the Church, they are contriving how to bring it plausibly in, to throw up the inclosure and make it common, to take away those things upon the account of which it hath its Denomination, and is distinguished from all others. They have declared their Affections to the Church of *England*, to be neither blind nor partial, but have they not been both blind and partial to Dissenters, and to the worse sort of them? Those profane Hypocrites, that go under the name of Occasional Conformists? Is it not a burning Shame, a reproach to a Christian Nation, that Men should be suffered to prostitute the Holy Sacrament, the most venerable Mystery of our Religion, to such vile and sordid ends, meerly to secure a gainful Office, or a place of Trust; or to escape the lash and penalty of the Law? Who can without just Indignation reflect upon so base a Practice? That Men should be suffered to come to the Sacrament of the Body and

Blood of our blessed Redeemer, not as Christians, but as Politicians? Who can forbear to express what every honest Man must needs think of them? that their Name is odious, and their Religion scandalous; and so is doubly theirs that defend them. It is too plain, that the want of true Christian Zeal in the generality of the Members of the Church of *England*, is one of the immediate, if not the greatest cause of the Distractions, and ill Estate of it, in defect of which hath succeeded the partial, and scandalous Conformity of the Clergy, the Occasional Conformity of the Laiety, and a careless Indifference in Religion almost in all; this hath made Men Sacrifice truth to Popularity, and to cry up Peace and Moderation, to the prejudice of Faith and all revealed Religion. This hath occasioned scandalous Reflections upon our Holy Religion, and all the great and good Men that have been concerned in the Vindication of it; to this we owe the unhappy distinction of High and Low Church-men, framed on purpose to divide and destroy us. This hath revived the project of Comprehension and Alteration, and has contrived so many ways to establish a New Religion, that it has put Men out of conceit with the Old one.

These, and many more are the pernicious Consequences of that odious Lukewarmness, and scandalous Indifferency, which is applauded by some great and popular Men, and recommended under the specious name of Moderation; and is required as a necessary Qualification to recommend Men to their Favours, and Preferments. A Man that is zealously affected to the Constitution, either of our Church or State, is in some Mens opinion, no better than a

Jacobite,

Jacobite, or a *Papist*; but whatsoever opprobrious Names we may incurr, we must not part with our Religion, and the Articles, in compliance with these popular Pleas for Peace and Moderation. The Faith is a sacred *Depositum* committed to our care, to be preserved inviolable and entire; and we cannot without the highest Treachery deliver it up to these empty, tho' popular Pretences; and therefore I humbly conceive it to be the Duty of every sincere Member of the Church of *England*, of every Clergyman thereof, especially, to be zealously affected to this Church. In this sense certainly, every Member of this Church ought to be a High Churchman, that is, to be highly in love with the Church; for he that is not so, cannot be a true Church-man: For how can he be said to be a true Member of a Church, that has not a very high esteem and love for that Church, of which he professes himself a Member? Therefore every true and sincere Churchman ought to think it to be so far from a Disparagement to be reputed a High Church-man, that he ought to think it not only to be his Duty, but his credit and glory, not only to be so reputed, but to be really so. For as an ingenuous Author has well observed, *No Man thinks it a Disparagement to be Wolf high*; i. e. zealous in any good thing; in our Duty to God, in our Love to our Country, or to our Friend. To be called Low, i. e. Indifferent in such things, is the greatest Reflection we can put upon any Body; how then can the Name of a Low Church-man be Honourable, when the Name of a Low Friend is so Contemptible? To have a Low Regard for the Church, or wish her Low; in what sense

sense can this be justified ? or the other condemned of being an High Church-man ? when Love begins to run low, then comes Indifference, and generally after that an Aversion ; and I may add, after Aversion, Hatred ; and after Hatred, Destruction.

Since therefore true Christian Zeal is so necessary a Virtue, so necessary for the preservation of Religion in general, of the established Religion in particular; let us beseech Almighty God to inspire Us with this Holy Zeal, Us especially, who have the Honour to serve at his Altar ; let not the popular Affectation of Moderation tempt us to any undue Compliances ; let us conform to the Canon as well as the Benefice, conform our selves entirely to all the Orders of the Church, embrace her Counsels, obey her Precepts ; let us imitate those glorious Examples of Virtue and Piety, which in her Festivals she recommends to us ; and next to them, that blessed Fruit of her own Womb, her Martyrs and Confessors, as burning and shining Lights ; as shining in their Learning, as burning in their Piety and Devotion, as any these latter ages has afforded us ; in a word, the way that she has chalked out, that let us walk in, as she teacheth, let us live, let us importunately plead her Cause at the Throne of Grace, and earnestly implore the continuance of God's gracious Providence for her Protection and Preservation ; plead her Cause before Men, and according as God has furnished us with Abilities, zealously defend and justifie her in her whole Constitution, in all her Rites and Usages against all such as shall blaspheme and oppose her.

I shall

I shall beg leave to conclude in the comprehensive and pathetick words of an Eloquent Prelate, with which he concludes his most excellent Discourse to his Clergy. " I Beseech Almighty God to assist " and prosper all your Labours to his Glory, and " your own Comfort in the great Day of Account ; " Towards the obtaining which blessed Ends, you " can never think of any better, or indeed of any " other means, than by living up in your private " Conversation, to the Religion you profess and " teach others ; and in your publick Office, by defending and supporting the Church established by " Law in this Kingdom.

" A Religion, and a Church that well deserves all " this at your hands ; being in its Faith most Primitive, " in its Orders most Apostolical ; in its Discipline " most moderate, in its Charity most diffusive ; in its " Devotions most Spiritual, as to the Substance ; most " Decent, as to the Circumstances. In few words, in " its Interests, it is inviolably united with the Laws " and Rights, with the Well-Being, I had almost said " with the Being of the *English* Nation and Govern- " ment : in its Principles, it is irreconcilable with the " Interests of Popery, and the only impregnable De- " fence against its Return into this Land : which it is " much to be lamented, that the Dissenters will not " see, and are therefore Dissenters, since it is evident " the Papists themselves have always seen it but too " well.

What then remains ; but that as Christians, as English-men, as Church-men, we shbould all make it our Principal, our only Concern, and pray to God the Father of Mercies, that all others of our Cha-

racter .

racter throughout the Nation, would make it theirs; to represent to the World the true Excellencies of such a Religion, and such a Church, by our Doctrine and Example, with Industry and Vigilance, with Stedfastness and Courage, in Meekness of Wisdom, and with Zeal according to Knowledge.

And if we shall all in this manner, devote ourselves to this work, we may then be assured, that the same Promise which our Lord Christ, in some of his last words on Earth made to his whole Church, will be eminently made good to this, the purest part of it in these latter Ages of Christianity, that he himself will be alway with it even to the end of the world. *Amen.*



F I N I S.

Printed for P. Monckton, at the Star in St. Paul's Church-yard.

Catholick Unity, and Church-Communion: Or the Christians Duty to Communicate constantly with the Church of England; with a just Reproof of several Novel and Schismatical Notions and Practices, particularly that of *Occasional Conformity*; clearly stated and proved by way of Question and Answer. Suited to the Well-meaning Country-man's Capacity. By Joseph Briggs, Vicar of Kirkburton in the County of York.

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